

DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

Federal Aviation Administration

14 CFR Part 39

[Docket No. FAA-2007-0265; Directorate Identifier 2007-NM-213-AD; Amendment 39-15531; AD 2008-11-09]

RIN 2120-AA64

Airworthiness Directives; Boeing Model 727 Airplanes

AGENCY: Federal Aviation Administration (FAA), DOT.

ACTION: Final rule.

SUMMARY: We are adopting a new airworthiness directive (AD) for all Boeing Model 727 airplanes. This AD requires repetitive inspections for any cracking of or damage to the left side and right side flight deck No. 2, No. 4, and No. 5 windows, as necessary, and corrective actions if necessary. This AD results from reports of in-flight departure and separation of the flight deck windows. We are issuing this AD to detect and correct cracking in the vinyl interlayer or damage to the structural inner glass panes of the flight deck No. 2, No. 4, and No. 5 windows, which could result in loss of a window and rapid loss of cabin pressure. Loss of cabin pressure could cause crew communication difficulties or crew incapacitation.

DATES: This AD is effective July 3, 2008.

The Director of the Federal Register approved the incorporation by reference of a certain publication listed in this AD as of July 3, 2008.

ADDRESSES: For service information identified in this AD, contact Boeing Commercial Airplanes, P.O. Box 3707, Seattle, Washington 98124-2207.

Examining the AD Docket

You may examine the AD docket on the Internet at <http://www.regulations.gov>; or in person at the Docket Management Facility between 9 a.m. and 5 p.m., Monday through Friday, except Federal holidays. The AD docket contains this AD, the regulatory evaluation, any comments received, and other information. The address for the Docket Office (telephone 800-647-5527) is the Document Management Facility, U.S. Department of Transportation, Docket Operations, M-30, West Building Ground Floor, Room W12-140, 1200 New Jersey Avenue, SE., Washington, DC 20590.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Berhane Alazar, Aerospace Engineer, Airframe Branch, ANM-120S, FAA, Seattle Aircraft Certification Office, 1601 Lind Avenue, SW., Renton, Washington 98057-3356; telephone (425) 917-6577; fax (425) 917-6590.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

Discussion

We issued a notice of proposed rulemaking (NPRM) to amend 14 CFR part 39 to include an airworthiness directive (AD) that would apply to all Boeing Model 727 series airplanes. That NPRM was published in the Federal Register on December 3, 2007 (72 FR 67873). That NPRM proposed to require repetitive inspections for any cracking of or damage to the left side and right side flight deck No. 2, No. 4, and No. 5 windows, as necessary, and corrective actions if necessary.

Changes Made to This AD

We have deleted paragraph (h)(4) of the NPRM and added a new paragraph (h) to this AD specifying that installation of metallic window blanks at cockpit eyebrow windows No. 4 and No. 5 in accordance with Supplemental Type Certificate (STC) ST01704SE terminates the initial and repetitive inspections for the flight deck No. 4 and No. 5 windows required by paragraph (f) of this AD. Incorporation of STC ST01704SE is considered a terminating action, not an alternative method of compliance (AMOC), since an AMOC can only be issued after an AD has been issued. We have also reidentified the AMOC paragraph of the NPRM as paragraph (i) in this AD.

Comments

We gave the public the opportunity to participate in developing this AD. We considered the comments received from the two commenters.

Support for the NPRM

Boeing supports the NPRM.

Request To Extend Compliance Times

FedEx requests that we extend the compliance time to 36 months or 3,600 flight hours, whichever occurs later, for the initial inspections of the flight deck No. 2, No. 4, and No. 5 windows and the repetitive intervals for the No. 4 and No. 5 windows. FedEx states this extension will allow it to do the initial inspections at a scheduled maintenance check. FedEx also states that extending the repetitive interval will allow the repetitive inspections of the No. 2, No. 4, and No. 5 to be done concurrently.

We do not agree with the request to extend certain compliance times. In developing an appropriate compliance time for this action, we considered the urgency associated with the subject unsafe condition and the practical aspect of accomplishing the required inspections within a period of time that corresponds to the normal scheduled maintenance for most affected operators. However, according to the provisions of paragraph (i) of this AD, we may approve requests to adjust the compliance time if the request includes data that show that the new compliance time would provide an acceptable level of safety.

Conclusion

We reviewed the relevant data, considered the comments received, and determined that air safety and the public interest require adopting the AD with the changes described previously. We also determined that these changes will not increase the economic burden on any operator or increase the scope of the AD.

Costs of Compliance

There are about 790 airplanes of the affected design in the worldwide fleet. This AD affects about 431 airplanes of U.S. registry. The required actions take about 2 work hours per airplane, at an average labor rate of \$80 per work hour. Based on these figures, the estimated cost of the AD for U.S. operators is \$68,960, or \$160 per airplane, per inspection cycle.

Authority for This Rulemaking

Title 49 of the United States Code specifies the FAA's authority to issue rules on aviation safety. Subtitle I, section 106, describes the authority of the FAA Administrator. "Subtitle VII: Aviation Programs," describes in more detail the scope of the Agency's authority.

We are issuing this rulemaking under the authority described in "Subtitle VII, Part A, Subpart III, Section 44701: General requirements." Under that section, Congress charges the FAA with promoting safe flight of civil aircraft in air commerce by prescribing regulations for practices, methods, and procedures the Administrator finds necessary for safety in air commerce. This regulation is within the scope of that authority because it addresses an unsafe condition that is likely to exist or develop on products identified in this rulemaking action.

Regulatory Findings

This AD will not have federalism implications under Executive Order 13132. This AD will not have a substantial direct effect on the States, on the relationship between the national government and the States, or on the distribution of power and responsibilities among the various levels of government.

For the reasons discussed above, I certify that this AD:

- (1) Is not a "significant regulatory action" under Executive Order 12866.
- (2) Is not a "significant rule" under DOT Regulatory Policies and Procedures (44 FR 11034, February 26, 1979); and
- (3) Will not have a significant economic impact, positive or negative, on a substantial number of small entities under the criteria of the Regulatory Flexibility Act.

You can find our regulatory evaluation and the estimated costs of compliance in the AD Docket.

List of Subjects in 14 CFR Part 39

Air transportation, Aircraft, Aviation safety, Incorporation by reference, Safety.

Adoption of the Amendment

Accordingly, under the authority delegated to me by the Administrator, the FAA amends 14 CFR part 39 as follows:

PART 39–AIRWORTHINESS DIRECTIVES

1. The authority citation for part 39 continues to read as follows:

Authority: 49 U.S.C. 106(g), 40113, 44701.

§ 39.13 [Amended]

2. The FAA amends § 39.13 by adding the following new AD:



2008-11-09 Boeing: Amendment 39-15531. Docket No. FAA-2007-0265; Directorate Identifier 2007-NM-213-AD.

Effective Date

- (a) This airworthiness directive (AD) is effective July 3, 2008.

Affected ADs

- (b) None.

Applicability

- (c) This AD applies to all Boeing Model 727, 727C, 727-100, 727-100C, 727-200, and 727-200F series airplanes, certificated in any category.

Unsafe Condition

- (d) This AD results from reports of in-flight departure and separation of the flight deck windows. We are issuing this AD to detect and correct cracking in the vinyl interlayer or damage to the structural inner glass panes of the flight deck No. 2, No. 4, and No. 5 windows, which could result in loss of a window and rapid loss of cabin pressure. Loss of cabin pressure could cause crew communication difficulties or crew incapacitation.

Compliance

- (e) You are responsible for having the actions required by this AD performed within the compliance times specified, unless the actions have already been done.

Repetitive Inspections and Replacement

- (f) At the applicable times specified in Tables 1, 2, and 3 of paragraph 1.E. of Boeing Alert Service Bulletin 727-56A0019, dated June 6, 2007, except as provided by paragraph (g) of this AD: Do the internal and external detailed inspections for any cracking of or damage to the left side and right side flight deck No. 2, No. 4, and No. 5 windows, as applicable, and do the applicable corrective actions before further flight, by accomplishing all of the applicable actions specified in the Accomplishment Instructions of Boeing Alert Service Bulletin 727-56A0019, dated June 6, 2007. Repeat the inspections thereafter at the applicable interval specified in paragraph 1.E. of Boeing Alert Service Bulletin 727-56A0019, dated June 6, 2007.

Exception to Compliance Times

- (g) Where Tables 1, 2, and 3 of paragraph 1.E. of Boeing Alert Service Bulletin 727-56A0019, dated June 6, 2007, specify counting the compliance time from " * * the date on this service bulletin," this AD requires counting the compliance time from the effective date of this AD.

Optional Terminating Action

(h) Installation of metallic window blanks at cockpit eyebrow windows No. 4 and No. 5 in accordance with Supplemental Type Certificate ST01704SE terminates the initial and repetitive inspections for the flight deck No. 4 and No. 5 windows required by paragraph (f) of this AD. All other applicable actions required by paragraph (f) of this AD must be fully complied with.

Alternative Methods of Compliance (AMOCs)

(i)(1) The Manager, Seattle Aircraft Certification Office (ACO), FAA, has the authority to approve AMOCs for this AD, if requested in accordance with the procedures found in 14 CFR 39.19.

(2) To request a different method of compliance or a different compliance time for this AD, follow the procedures in 14 CFR 39.19. Before using any approved AMOC on any airplane to which the AMOC applies, notify your appropriate principal inspector (PI) in the FAA Flight Standards District Office (FSDO), or lacking a PI, your local FSDO.

(3) An AMOC that provides an acceptable level of safety may be used for any repair required by this AD, if it is approved by an Authorized Representative for the Boeing Commercial Airplanes Delegation Option Authorization Organization who has been authorized by the Manager, Seattle ACO, to make those findings. For a repair method to be approved, the repair must meet the certification basis of the airplane, and the approval must specifically refer to this AD.

Material Incorporated by Reference

(j) You must use Boeing Alert Service Bulletin 727-56A0019, dated June 6, 2007, to do the actions required by this AD, unless the AD specifies otherwise.

(1) The Director of the Federal Register approved the incorporation by reference of this service information under 5 U.S.C. 552(a) and 1 CFR part 51.

(2) For service information identified in this AD, contact Boeing Commercial Airplanes, P.O. Box 3707, Seattle, Washington 98124-2207.

(3) You may review copies of the service information incorporated by reference at the FAA, Transport Airplane Directorate, 1601 Lind Avenue, SW., Renton, Washington; or at the National Archives and Records Administration (NARA). For information on the availability of this material at NARA, call 202-741-6030, or go to: http://www.archives.gov/federal_register/code_of_federal_regulations/ibr_locations.html.

Issued in Renton, Washington, on May 10, 2008.

Michael J. Kaszycki,

Acting Manager, Transport Airplane Directorate, Aircraft Certification Service.

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